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Man surrounded by his Poor Relations.

OUR POOR RELATIONS.

A PHILOZOIC ESSAY

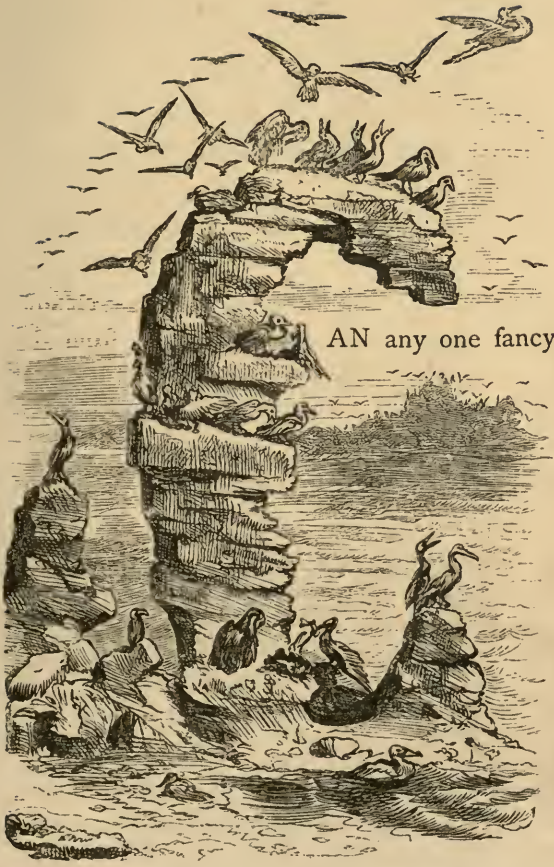
BY

COLONEL E. B. HAMLEY.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

CHIEFLY BY ERNEST GRISET.

BOSTON:
J. E. TILTON AND COMPANY.
1872.



CAN any one fancy what this world would be like if inhabited by no other animal but man?—the earth without its

four-footed and its creeping things, the sea and the river vacant of their shy silvery gleams and far-darting shadows, the air void of the choral hum of insects and the song of birds? What a dismal hush in creation! what a multitudinous charm and delight wanting to the woods, the fields, the shallows, and the deeps! What glory lost to the grass with the spotted lady-birds, the mail-clad beetles, and the slender grasshoppers! What splendor gone from the flower with the bronzed and fire-tipped bee that fed on its heart, and the painted butterfly that hovered above its petals! How dull had been Eden for Adam with nothing breathing but Eve, and all the rest of creation inanimate — no voice but that of the wind or the thunder — no motion but the flow of the stream, the floating of the clouds, the waving of the trees! The earth would have been silent as a picture; the forest and the plain, the mountain and the lake, forlorn, tremendous, insupportable solitudes — solitudes that none would have sought, since there could have been neither hunters nor fishers, herdsmen nor shepherds.

In far other measure has the gift of life been poured forth upon the earth. All the genera-

tions of all the tribes of men are but a handful to the myriads of creatures which to-day, to-morrow, and every day, haunt land, air, and water, till inanimate nature teems with the sentient vitality that lends it all its interest and all its significance. A leaf holds a family, a clod a community, and there is material for the speculations of a lifetime in the tenants of the neighboring meadow, and of the brook that waters it. The unclouded heavens would be oppressive in their vastness and loneliness but for those frequent travellers high in air, the rook, the raven, or rarer heron, that flap their untiring way onwards till they melt again into the blue depths out of which they grew upon the sight. The bare white cliffs are no longer barren when their clangorous population of chough and kittiwake and daw are abroad in the sunshine ; and the black storm-cloud, coming up on the blast behind its veil of rain, gains a beauty which before it had not, as it throws into relief the white wing of the sea-gull. Nay, in some countries where calm and sunshine are more permanent conditions of the atmosphere than here, we learn that the regions of air are not only a highway, but a home. Sir Samuel

Baker observes that when an animal is slain in the Nubian wilderness, within a few seconds a succession of birds, hitherto invisible, descend on the prey, and always in the same order. First the black-and-white crow arrives, then the buzzard, then the small vulture, then the large vulture, lastly the marabout stork. "I believe," says Sir Samuel, "that every species keeps to its own particular elevation, and that the atmosphere contains regular strata of birds of prey, who, invisible to the human eye at their enormous height, are constantly resting upon their widespread wings and soaring in circles, watching with telescopic sight the world beneath." It is like a tale born of Persian or Arabian fantasy to hear that above the traveller in the desert hangs a huge mansion, "impalpable to feeling as to sight," with its basement, its first and second floors, its attics, and its turrets ; or (to vary the image) that the social system of the atmosphere comprises its lower orders, its middle classes, and its upper ten thousand.

It is a pleasant, if somewhat extravagant, fancy, to figure to one's self man dwelling amid his fellow-tenants of the earth in completest harmony, the friend and companion of some,

the protector of others, the harmer of none, the intelligent observer of all. Who shall say what new unforeseen relations might not have been established between us and our humble friends on this basis of confidence and affection? Who shall say that they might not have revealed to us that secret which they have guarded since the creation — the secret of their instincts and their ways; what their notions are of the world, of each other, and of man; and how far they look before and after? It was one of Hawthorne's prettiest wild fancies, that Donatello, the descendant of the old Fauns, and the partial inheritor of their sylvan nature, still held kinship with the untamed creatures of the woods, and could draw them into communion with him by the peculiar charm of his voice. Every one who has domesticated some strange, shy creature can testify to the wealth of character which it came to display in the ripening warmth of intimacy; and several naturalists (by which term we are far from intending to signify the dissectors of frogs, the scientific experimenters on the nerves and muscles of dogs, or the impalers of beetles and butterflies) have recorded their pleasant experiences of these

connections. Thus one of them, in spite of ancient prejudice and proverbial adjectives, has elicited fine social qualities in a bear; another has owned a beaver of such intelligence that it might almost have been persuaded to become a Christian; while Caroline Bowles, whose taste in this particular we respect rather than like, kept a toad (a practice which we had thought to be peculiar to old ladies who are in league with the devil), and grew so fond of the unpromising associate as to celebrate its virtues in verse. What diversity and distinctness of character in the poet Cowper's three hares! Could any amount of hare-soup, *civet de lièvre*, jugged hare, or roast hare, that ever figured at a century of city feasts, have made amends to the world for the want of the affectionate record of their social qualities? Yet many a Puss, Tiney, and Bess, as full of whim and play and individuality as they, perishes unappreciated in every day of cover-shooting, or is run into, in the open, by heartless and undiscriminating beagles. Especially in their early youth are the four-footed peoples lovely and of good report: not to mention such obvious examples as the soft graces of kittens, the pretty, stiff frisk-

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ings of lambs, like toys in motion (all the lamb family are as full of quaint fun as Charles himself), and the clumsy geniality of puppies, the rule will be found elsewhere of pretty general application. Young pigs are delightful — their gambols, and squeaky grunts, and pokings in the straw, and relations with their mother and brethren, are marked with a grave facetiousness all their own, though the spectator who would enjoy them must be careful to ignore the sensual aldermanic life of the mature porker. Young donkeys, on the other hand, are by so much the more charming, as being invested with the pathos (quite awanting to the pigling) of the future hard existence that is pretty certain to await each member of the race as a poor man's drudge. Foxes, in private life, and apart from their public merits as main supporters of a great national institution, are full of estimable qualities, as many a poacher who, watching for other game, has noted Mrs. Reynard unbending in the moonlight with her young family, might testify; and a little fox, with his face full of a grave, sweet intelligence, which is as yet undebased by the look of worldly astuteness conspicuous in after life, is one of the prettiest

sights in the world. Domesticated, they develop, in addition to their native sagacity, a most affectionate attachment to those who are kind to them; and though, owing to personal peculiarities, their society is most agreeable when the visitor approaches them from windward, yet acquaintance with a fox will always repay cultivation. Going further afield for examples of unobtrusive merit, what a wealth of humor is comprised in the phrase, "a wilderness of monkeys!" What endless fun, what fresh comedy, what brilliant farce, what infinity of by-play and private jesting, quite beyond the reach of our most popular comedians, is being forever enacted in those leafy theatres where they hold their untiring revels! How little are they dependent on the stimulus of a sympathetic audience, how free from the vulgarity of playing at the gallery, how careless about splitting the ears of the groundlings, how careful always to hold the mirror up to nature and to man! Hamlet could have given them no advice that would have been of service; on the contrary, they would have been spoiled by being "sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought,"—a metaphysical monkey, mooning over his bar-

ren philosophy, would sit in dismal discord with the surrounding fun. Even in captivity the merry race cultivate the drama, and the audiences about the great cages in the Jardin des Plantes or our own Zoölogical, are never disappointed in the performance.

It was on a Sunday last summer, that we witnessed, in the monkey-house in the Regent's Park, a piece, the serious cast of which was, on Shakespearean principles, relieved by passages of lighter matter. Perched on their poles engaged in mutual friendly investigation, or swinging airily on ropes, the community was unusually quiet, while a female monkey, not the least of whose attractions was a roseate flush which spread itself over part of her else russet-gray person, was engaged in deep flirtation with a cavalier whose nether-monkey was of a tender green shading into gold. The impassioned Romeo, chattering voluble protestations, followed the coy but loquacious Juliet, while that *lasciva puella* pelted him in retiring with orange-peel, nutshells, and straws, till they arrived beneath a branch along which lay extended another monkey, who watched the pair attentively. He may have been a rival, like the County Paris, or a

dissatisfied relative, like Tybalt, or possibly he may have resented as an injury and a slight any preference of other attractions to his own, for he presented to the curious eye some embellishments of brilliant azure. Be that as it may, without the slightest warning he dropped like a plummet on the enamoured pair, and, seizing Romeo, bit him in his gorgeous hinder parts. The injured swain, turning with an appalling grin, grappled his assailant; Juliet fled shrieking, and her outcries, mingling with the noise of combat, conveyed the tidings of the strife to all the cage, and "spread the truth from pole to pole." Thereupon all the other monkeys, leaving their own private concerns, vaulted from rope and perch towards the scene of action, where, with shrill clamor, they precipitated themselves on the combatants, and joined in a general fray; while an elderly and morose baboon, delayed by age and infirmity, arrived rather later, and, armed with a stick, belabored all indiscriminately who came within his reach. Shortly after, we beheld, in a neighboring cage, a monkey, of dark, attenuated figure, clinging with hands and feet, like a gigantic hairy spider, to the wire roof, apparently absorbed in medita-

tion, while his tail hung perpendicularly down to the length of about a yard. This appendage offered irresistible attractions to a friend upon a neighboring rope, who, after long and earnestly surveying it as he swung, reached it in one wild leap, and, grasping it with both hands, proceeded to use it as the vehicle of an animated gymnastic performance. The sage above, noways discomposed, slowly turned his head, and, after a patronizing glance at the pendent acrobat, resumed the thread of his meditations. Possibly this was intended as a practical illustration of the feat known to logicians as "jumping at a conclusion." But whether grave or gay, the charm of undomesticated animals is, that they show us their nature fresh from the fashioner, unmodified by education, or the opinion of others, or any influence which might make them wish to seem other than they are; and they follow their sports, their matings, the shaping of their abodes, their parental cares, the purveying of their food, their slumbers, and flights and perambulations, their relations to their fellows, whether gregarious or solitary, with absolute independence of all impulses except those which inspired the first of their race.

The idea of a paradise of animals who move without fear round the central figure of man, is not altogether fanciful, for something like it has been witnessed from time to time by lost crews, or storm-driven mariners, who reach, Crusoe-like, a haven in some hitherto unexplored province of Ocean. Birds of strange plumage come out to welcome the solitary figure in the boat, to perch on the prow, and to herald its progress; it nears the shore of the far antarctic region,

amid a crowd of gamesome seals, like the car of Amphitrite conducted by a procession of

Tritons. On the sands sit sea-lions, gazing with their solemn eyes at man, like conscript fathers receiving a foreign envoy; penguins waddle in his path; the greater and lesser albatross come floating by, turning a bright, fearless glance on him. Or, in warmer regions, dolphins are his *avant couriers;* at his approach, turtles broad of back scarce quit their eggs in the sand to crawl into the water; the gaudy parrots, and creamy, crested cockatoos, scream inquiry, not indignation, from the branches; the woodpecker scarce pauses in his tapping; the shining dove ceases not to woo his mate; the apes chatter a welcome, and grin not less affably than many a host and hostess who desire to give the guest a hospitable reception. We have ourselves, in the depths of Canadian forests, amid pines "hidden to the knees" in snow, seen the white hare pause to look at us, as she hopped past a few yards off; the tree-grouse, glancing downward from a branch close by with an air of courteous inquiry; and the spruce-partridges never disturbing the order in which they sat on the boughs, as our snow-shoes crunched the crisp surface underneath — a confidence but ill requited; for an Indian,

who guided us in those trackless woods, ascending the tree, and beginning with the bird that sat lowest, plucked off, by means of a stick and a noose, several in succession, passing the fatal loop round their necks with a skill worthy of Calcraft. Not to us does this kind of tameness seem "shocking," as Cowper thought it must have seemed to lonely Crusoe, but rather delightful, because proof of the innocence that imagines no evil; and very touching, because it betrays the simple creature which one might think it ought to protect.

In fact, the relations between man and his co-tenants of the globe would have been altogether delightful but for one unlucky circumstance, — a circumstance which, far from being inevitable or natural, is one of the insoluble problems of the earth, and has caused a terrible jar and discord in creation, — namely, the fact that one animal is food for another. No doubt, as matters stand, beasts and birds of prey must follow their nature; the tearing of flesh and the picking of bones are the correlatives of fangs and grinders, beaks and talons; and the comparative anatomist is compelled to coincide with that practical Yankee, who, being told that in the days of the

millennium the lion and the lamb will lie down together, said, "He expected the lamb would lie down inside the lion." Nor is there any sign of relaxation in the vigor with which man continues to devour fish, flesh, and fowl; and no individual human stomach reaches maturity without sacrificing whole hecatombs of victims by the way. If we (the present writer) were to make any pretence to a virtuous distaste for flesh, we should justly be rebuked by the thought of all the slayings and cookings that our presence in the world has caused and will yet cause. All the yet unborn, unlittered, and unhatched creatures that will be trussed and jointed, skewered, basted, roasted, boiled, grilled, and served up, to keep our single soul and body together, might very properly low, bleat, grunt, gobble, quack, cackle, and chirp us the lie in our throat. In particular might we be haunted and humbled by the memory of our carnivorous desires on that evening when, having toiled all day on foot from Martigny up the Great St. Bernard, we sat, hungry and weary, a solitary guest, with one sad monk for host, in the huge dining-hall of the Hospice. We were hungry with the hunger of those snow-clad

altitudes; succulent visions of stew and cutlet floated before our fancy; and when an attendant bore into the twilight-shadowed hall a tray with many dishes, we blessed the pious memory of the sainted Bernard. Our gratitude cooled a little with the soup, which seemed to be compounded of grass and warm water: the remains of some cold pudding, of a kind suitable for infants, followed; then some slices of potato fried in oil; then a ragout of the green products of the Italian ditches; till at length, in the growing darkness, a plate was placed before us, on which glimmered some small brown patches which might be diminutive cutlets, or sliced kidneys, or possibly bits of baked meat. Into the nearest we plunged our fork — shade of Dalgetty, it was a stewed prune! A dried apple, we believe, concluded the repast, but we did not eat it. As to grace, Amen stuck in our throat; and we had rather not repeat the epithets which we breathed to our pillow that night in honor of the canonized founder of the feast. Nor among our gastronomic recollections should we omit the time when, on a foreign strand, where we had subsisted for some days chiefly on the cabbages of

the country, and were lying sick and jaundiced and void of all desire for food, in our tent, we were driven by some strange perverse impulse to devise an infinite number of bills of fare, composed of the choicest viands, to be partaken by the choicest guests, whenever we should again sit in the cheerful warmth of a certain club in Pall Mall; visions since in great part realized. When, therefore, we argue that the juxtaposition of the words "animal food" expresses a disastrous condition of our existence, the candid reader will understand that we make no pretence to have discovered an alternative, or to be exempt from the common misfortune.

To a race of vegetarian men surrounded by vegetarian animals — herds from which they demanded only milk, flocks whose sole tribute was their fleece, and poultry which supplied nothing but eggs to the board — the idea of depriving creatures of life in order to eat them would probably seem monstrous and repulsive. But custom will reconcile us to anything; the Fans (an unprejudiced African tribe) feast on their nearest relatives with as little disgust as we on a haunch or a sirloin; and if bills of fare prevailed among that interesting people, a *rôt*

of aged grandfather, an *entrée* of curried aunt, or sucking-nephew's head *en tortue*, would be as much matters of course as our ordinary dishes. But notwithstanding the omnivorous conformation of the human teeth, and the all-assimilative faculty of the human stomach, it is scarcely to be imagined that man, placed in a paradise of roots and fruits, herbs and grain, honey and spices, milk and wine, would have originated of himself the idea of killing and eating animals. He may have been first corrupted by the bad example of the *carnivora*. The spectacle of a tiger rending a kid, or an eagle a pigeon, may have habituated him to connect the ideas of slaughter and food; next, his imitative propensities may have kindled the desire to perform the process himself; and, the imagination thus depraved, any remaining scruples would speedily vanish, in time of dearth, before the impulse of a craving stomach. But however the custom may have arisen, we are not left in any doubt as to the dietary habits of our primeval ancestors. The earliest trace of man on the earth is the flint weapon with which he slew the bear, the deer, and the beaver, whose bones strew the site of his dwellings. His first gar-

ments were torn from the backs they grew on. His first business was the chase. Natural philosophers tell us that a habit, accidental at first, grows, in the course of transmission, into the nature, and becomes a characteristic. It was perhaps in this way that the germ of destructiveness, implanted by instant and ever-pressing necessity in the aboriginal breast, struck such deep root, that, in all succeeding ages, every corner of the inhabited earth has been a shambles, and the rest of animated creation has been compelled to accept from man either subjection or persecution — persecution often pushed even to extermination. In the pride of that power which, through the faculty of speech, man possesses, of combining forces and transmitting knowledge, he has exercised ruthlessly his dominion over the beast of the field and the fowl of the air. Wherever he has held sway, there have all other creatures drawn their painful breath in subjection, unchampioned and unpitied. If in that imaginary paradise of animals which we have already sketched, we simply introduce the figure of a NATIVE, the whole scene changes. That lean, low-browed, flat-nosed caricature of humanity, more like a painter's lay

figure than a sculptor's model — full of propensities much viler than those of the animals around him — selfish, remorseless, faithless, treacherous — is monarch of all he surveys. The birds have learnt the power of the poisoned arrow — the beasts have a wholesome dread of the ambush and the snare. That bronze-colored being, distinguished from the ape chiefly by superior malevolence and articulate speech, walks surrounded by a wide circle of fear. The creatures around him have learnt, and taught their young, the lesson that he is as malignant as he is powerful. Only give him time, and he will depopulate whole regions of their animals. The gigantic Moa no longer stalks over the hills of New Zealand. The moose disappears from the east of the American continent as the buffalo from the west. South Africa, that used to teem with wild herds, crowding the wide landscape up to the horizon, and astounding the traveller with the magnificent spectacle of tribes of antelopes, zebras, and giraffes hiding the plain, elephants and rhinoceroses browsing securely amid the clumps of trees, and hippopotamuses swarming in the rivers, has, since the negroes were supplied with guns, been almost swept of its game,

and in some parts not only have the birds disappeared, but the very moles and mice are growing scarce. In fact, in all lands the savage gluts himself with slaughter. Nor is his civilized brother behind him in the propensity to destroy, which nothing but the interest of proprietorship avails to check. Everywhere it is absolutely a capital crime to be an unowned creature. Darwin tells us that "when the Falkland Islands were first visited by man, the large wolf-like dog (*Canis antarcticus*) fearlessly came to meet Byron's sailors, who, mistaking their ignorant curiosity for ferocity, ran into the water to avoid them; *even recently, a man, by holding a piece of meat in one hand and a knife in the other, could sometimes stick them at night.*" Beautiful attitude of humanity! In those parts of America where game-laws do not exist, the game has almost disappeared; in France the small birds have been destroyed, to the great joy and prosperity of the insects and caterpillars; in England the interests of game-preserving have proscribed the owl, the falcon, the eagle, the weasel, and a host of other tenants of the woods. Generations ago the bustard had vanished from our downs, and within the memory of man the

last pair of wheatears were shot in Sussex. The act which has of late come to be stigmatized as "bird-murder," still, in rural districts, casts a halo of glory round the perpetrator; and we frequently read in provincial papers how "Mr. James Butcher, gamekeeper at Longears, lately shot a fine specimen of the golden eagle;" or how "our respected fellow-townsman, Mr. Noodle, killed, last Wednesday, the only hoopoe that has visited this part of the country for many years." Nightingales, so common in the south of England, have not spread so far westward as Devonshire; and an idiot once wrote to the papers to announce that he had just succeeded in killing one which had been guilty of straying within the confines of that county, "as it was singing on the top of a thorn." Sometimes, in distant seas, new tracts of coast have been discovered abounding in seals, and straightway crews of enterprising mariners have arrived armed with spears and clubs, who have wallowed in slaughter, never ceasing to stab and strike till all that hapless and harmless life was extinct, no tenants again forever lending cheer to those desolate shores, the gray, lonely sea no more rippled by their sports.

Wherever there is no law for the river or the lake, the inhabitants of the flood disappear — even the countless tribes of the ocean are being rapidly thinned by the insatiate rapacity of man.

But not for his bodily needs alone has the human animal been so lavish in destroying others. His spiritual interests have also demanded much of that kind of prodigality. A devil, under one name or another, lies at the root of many religions ; and many, in their infancies, have recognized the duty of propitiating the unseen powers by sacrifice. Deeply convinced, and with good reason, of the tremendous power of evil in human affairs ; feeling in his own lot how irresistible is the force of malignant influences, how futile his efforts to evade them, — man has soon learned to associate the supernatural power which he dreads, with delight in inflicting pain ; and, accustomed to slay creatures for his own wants, he next conceives the idea of slaying them for the satisfaction of his sanguinary gods. In most lands the supplications of the savage to his deity are written in blood ; and his petitions, often foolish and often wicked, are thought to be more palatable if they ascend in the smoke of burnt-offerings. As

civilization advances, sacrifice grows more ceremonial — butchery becomes a priestly function; and the ancient world was filled with blood-stained altars, and the mythology of its peoples with prescribed modes of reverential slaughter, and the assignment to particular deities of particular victims. It was natural that the idea of propitiation by vicarious suffering should extend till it included man himself; and had the oxen, and lambs, and kids, and birds, whose fellows bled so constantly as votive offerings, been capable of sharing the strictly human pleasure of gratified vindictiveness, they would have found ample opportunity for exulting in the spectacle of men sacrificed by their fellows. "Moloch, horrid king," has been worshipped, though not always under that name, in many lands, and in many ages; his grinning image has looked down on Druids with their wicker idols filled with victims, and on Aztec priests laying hearts yet beating on his altar-stone. Even in our day, his votary the Thug makes assassination the chief article of religion, and the king of Dahomey floats his consecrated canoe in human blood. There was a profound meaning, and one applicable to the history of our race, in Hogarth's repre-

sentation of different stages in atrocity, where the hero, beginning with cruelty, ends with murder.

Nevertheless, in all his slayings and his sacrifices, man has had standing between him and reprobation the plea of the hard conditions of life, which rendered his acts natural and necessary, and therefore not degrading. Even when the chase, as in the great huntings of the Asiatic monarchs, left the plain laden with carcasses, this was still only the excess of a propensity easy to be justified. But perhaps, in course of time, the habit of looking on the whole animal world as absolutely subject to the convenience of man, and of regarding the infliction of death with indifference, developed a latent germ in our mysterious nature, whereupon a new human quality — namely, CRUELTY — sprang up and greatly flourished. No doubt it had, in the congenial soil of individual human breasts, in all times found its habitat: natures partaking so much more of the demon than the god as to find enjoyment in the contemplation of pain, must always have been but too plentiful. But in course of time this poisonous offspring of a bad heart came, in gardeners' language, to be "bedded out" in national institutions, such as

the Flavian and other amphitheatres, our own bear-baitings, bull-baitings, badger-baitings, rat-killings, and cock-fights, the arenas of Eastern princes, and the bull-rings of Spain ; and whole peoples were trained in the main doctrine of devil-worship — namely, that it is delightful to inflict or to witness agony. All the aid which grandeur of architecture, pomp of ceremonial, the sanction of authority, and the keen expectation and high-strung interest which are engendered in the holiday assemblies of multitudes, could lend to develop cruelty and quench humanity, was afforded by these great spectacles. Rome transferred to the huge circus, on these occasions, her statecraft, her priesthood, her beauty, her lofty patrician airs and graces, her jolly plebeian merriment ; fresh garlands, new togas, gay girdles, rich robes, and brilliant gems, made the wide sweep of the amphitheatre a circle of splendor. Into the sand-strewn space below crowded the bewildered inhabitants of the forest and the desert — the slow-stalking elephant, the giraffe with its towering form and gentle eyes, the sleek slinking tiger, the sturdy undaunted boar, the plumed ostriches hurrying hither and thither in search of an outlet. Brilliant thus

far the spectacle — but interesting to "those bold Romans" only for its promise of slaughter; and their enjoyment was incomplete till the bright fur was dabbled in blood, the huge forms still in death, the feathers strewn on the sand; and then, from full and grateful hearts, they applauded the imperial purveyor of the sport, the good old monarch Tiberius, who went home to spend the evening in torturing some slaves, or the most sweet youth Domitian, who had been killing flies in his palace all the morning. And in the *Plazas de Toros* of Ronda, Seville, or Madrid, the modern spectator may realize no small portion of the magnificence of the amphitheatres of the old world, and may see, joyous and eager as ever, the spirit that delights in blood. This consecration of cruelty could not but react on the people; torture was a refined, and at the same time a cheap, pleasure; poverty itself, debarred from such luxuries as elephants and ostriches, could at least procure cats, rats, birds, and frogs; and wherever there was a defenceless animal and a few ingenuous youth, *there* was a small Colosseum. It was natural that a people thus trained should demand, for the full satisfaction of their desires, the blood of gladiators and captives.

No longer sacrificing to the ancient gods, we still lay living offerings on the shrine of the chief divinity in modern mythology — namely, Science. The most virtuous among us agree (not without a certain air of pious satisfaction at the supposed necessity) that it is lawful to dissect live animals for the benefit of humanity. Where the sanctioning law is to be found we know not, and it was certainly made without reference to the parties principally concerned, which seems hardly consonant with the spirit of modern legislation. It may, however, be granted, that when some great discovery is the result, the wrong may be, if not justified, excused — that, when Bell succeeds in demonstrating the functions of the brain, we may agree not to inquire too closely into the number of living creatures whose nerves of motion and sensation were laid bare and pricked with needles during the investigation. Neither can we altogether condemn that discoverer when we find him preparing to procure a monkey on which to practise the operation that goes by his name (Bell's, not the monkey's), for the cure of squinting — though, of course, the monkey would not care if the whole human race squint-

ed. For a lover to adore a nymph who squints — to sit in her presence in a kind of cross-fire from eyes which look all ways at once, like the muzzles of rifles at a Volunteer review — to believe that she is contemplating him, when she is gazing tenderly at his rival, and to suspect that she is ogling his rival when he is himself the sole object of her erratic glances, — is a situation so full of anxiety and doubt that we recommend it to the notice of our minor poets; while the joy of the swain at finding that an operation has brought the vision of the beloved one into the paths of rectitude, and that he can now bask confidently in the focus of her looks, may well compensate for some slight inconvenience to the subject of the original experiment. On such grounds we may condone the practices of Bell; but after excepting a few great names, we fear there are still, throughout the surgical and veterinary professions, numerous diligent inquirers, who, without the intellect necessary to penetrate the secrets of science, are engaged in the pursuit of delusions, or of crotchets, or of matters unimportant if true, and on such grounds do not hesitate to submit animals to the most prolonged and horrible tortures. The

professional gentleman who is known to be engaged in such practices may very fairly be suspected of indulging a taste under the sanction of a duty; for it is hardly to be believed that anybody who did not enjoy vivisection for its own sake would submit his nature to what would be such violence, unless under the pressure of a very exceptionally powerful motive. The miscreants of the veterinary colleges of Lyons and Alfort, for example, who habitually performed many most terrible operations, some of them of no possible application as remedies, on the same living horse, and who warmly resented interference, must have found a horrid relish in their vile vocation. In a letter published in a journal devoted to the interests of animals, we find one of the principal surgeons of the Hotel Dieu, M. le Docteur M—— (we are sorry we cannot give his honorable name), reported as saying that studies and experiments are always made on living animals; and that there is a class of men who live by catching stray dogs and selling them to be operated on, five or six operations being often performed on the same animal. "Sometimes," said the Doctor, "I have taken pity upon the poor brutes;

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they showed so much intelligence, and seemed to think I was operating upon them to do them good. In such cases I have occasionally kept them, *but usually I turn them into the street.*" Is it uncharitable to hope that the next dog operated on may be rabid, and may bite this scientific inquirer? There is a well-known piteous case, too, of an English vivisector who operated on his own dog while it licked the hand that continued to dissect it.

But there is yet another class of these votaries of science, called Naturalists, to whom no kind of creature that can be classified comes amiss as a victim, from a butterfly to a hippopotamus. Armed sometimes with a rifle, sometimes less expensively with a pin, they go forth into strange lands to collect what they call the "fauna." Millions of moths, before they have fluttered out half their brief existence in the sunshine, are secured by these sportsmen, and impaled in boxes. Lizards and other reptiles suspected of differing from the rest of their race, are put to death without mercy. The rarity of various birds, and the splendor of their plumage, are held to be sufficient grounds for their execution. So earnest in their pursuit

are these gentlemen, that we have sometimes, when reading their own accounts of their doings, suspected that they would have scrupled little to add a stray Native now and then to their collection, provided they did not thereby expose themselves to the penalties for murder. We will here give some extracts from the recent work of a naturalist, which is in many respects agreeable and entertaining, premising that the "Mias" who figures in them is a gigantic ape (the orang-outang, we believe), a native of Borneo, living for the most part inoffensively on the products of the woods; and that only a single case is quoted in the book of any of the race having injured mankind, in which one that was intercepted in its retreat to a tree, and stabbed with spears and hacked with axes, resented these playful aggressions so far as to bite one of its assailants in the arm. This is the account of the result of a great many shots fired by the naturalist at a Mias who was making off through the branches of the tall trees: "On examination we found that he had been dreadfully wounded. Both legs were broken, one hip-joint and the root of the spine completely shattered, and two bullets were

found flattened in his neck and jaws! Yet he was still alive when he fell."

Another of these subjects of scientific investigation was thus treated:—

"Two shots caused this animal to lose his hold, but he hung for a considerable time by one hand, and then fell flat on his face, and was half buried in the swamp. For several minutes he lay groaning and panting, and we stood close round, expecting every breath to be his last. Suddenly, however, by a violent effort, he raised himself up, causing us all to step back a yard or two, when, standing nearly erect, he caught hold of a small tree, and began to ascend it. Another shot through the back caused him to fall down dead. A flattened bullet was found in his tongue, having entered the lower part of the abdomen, and completely traversed the body, fracturing the first cervical vertebra. Yet it was after this fearful wound that he had risen and begun climbing with considerable facility."

This was the fate of another of these unfortunates:—

"We found a Mias feeding in a very lofty durion tree, and succeeded in killing it after eight shots. Unfortunately it remained in the tree, hanging by its hands; and we were obliged to leave it and return home, as it was several miles off. As I felt pretty sure it would fall during the night, I returned to the place early the next morning, and found it on the ground beneath the tree. To my astonishment and pleasure, it appeared to be a different kind from any I had yet seen."

Perhaps the reader, whose sensibilities are as yet unaffected by companionship with natural-

ists, may think that these are very shocking penalties for the crime of being a Mias, and of possessing an anatomical structure much coveted by museums ; and may feel disposed (parodying Madame Roland) to exclaim, " O Science, what deeds are done in thy name ! "

In those days (says an Oriental fabulist in the least known of his apologues which we have taken the trouble to translate from the original Arabic), when certain sages were acquainted with the language of animals (an accomplishment which they inherited from Solomon, who is well known to have added this to his other stores of wisdom), it naturally came to pass that, not only did men know something of the thoughts of birds and beasts, but to birds and beasts were imparted some of the ideas of men, and, among others, that of a devil or malignant power who is the source of evil. Much impressed with the reality of the ills of life, and the expediency of lessening them, the fowls and brutes resolved to seek some means of propitiating the being who exercised over them so baleful an influence. Accordingly they held a convocation to debate the matter, and finding

it necessary, as a first step, to gain a more definite idea of the nature and attributes of this malevolent Power, different classes of animals were called on to deseribe the ills they ehiefly suffered from, that their misfortunes might thus be traeed to a common source. The Lion, as the representative of beasts of prey, declared that he would have nothing to eomplain of, game being plentiful, were it not for the aecursed hunters with their deviees, whieh left him no peaee. The Antelope said that the elass of wild ereatures to whieh he belonged would be eontent to match their own vigilanee and swiftness against the eraft and strength of their four-footed persecutors, but that they could not eontend with the terrible ingenuity of man, who, in his pursuit of them, had even called other animals to his aid; and that, whereas a beast of prey molested them only for the satisfaetion of his individual needs, man was insatiate in slaughter. The birds were of one consent that they feared little the hostility of animals, but that snares and traps rendered their lives a burden by eausing them to distrust every mouthful they ate. The Sheep, as the mouthpieee of a large

class of domestic animals, declared that he was well cared for, fed, and protected from harm, but that he paid a heavy price for these favors by living in constant expectation of the inevitable and extremely premature moment when he would become mutton. The Horse averred that he also was well cared for, and that, moreover, his life, unlike the sheep's, was insured so long as he had health and strength, but (motioning with his muzzle towards the saddle-marks on his back and the spur-galls on his flanks) that his life was deprived of savor by being one of perpetual slavery. The Dog said that his lot might perhaps seem the happiest of all, in being the companion of his master, but that in reality he had more to lament than any of them, since protection was only granted to him on condition that he should aid in the destruction of his fellow-brutes. A great mass of information having been accumulated in this way, the assembly seemed still as far as ever from discovering the object of its inquiry, when an ancient Raven, of vast repute for wisdom, hopping to a loftier branch, desired to speak. "My friends," he croaked, "what we are seeking lies under our very noses. I perceive what this power of evil

is, and how futile will be all attempts to propitiate it, for it is clear that Man, insatiate Man, is our Devil!"

Yet, in truth, is Nature often no less harsh than man in dealing with her inarticulate offspring. To them (as indeed to us) she shows fitful favor, capricious severity. In one zone animal life seems all happiness, in another all misery. It is a pleasure to a care-laden, tax-hampered citizen merely to think how, under certain conditions of adaptation to climate, whole tribes of creatures, countless in number, revel

in the opulence and prodigality of food, of air, of sunshine, and of sport ; — the task of supporting life is so easy as to leave them infinite leisure for enjoying it ; — they are as Sandwich Islanders, into whose simple, untaught methods of making existence pleasure, no missionary can ever introduce the jarring element of a half-awakened conscience. As Shelley heard in the notes of the skylark "clear, keen joyance," "love of its own kind," and "ignorance of pain," and exhausted himself in sweet similitudes for the small musician that "panted forth a flood of rapture so divine," — so, had we his gift, we might discern elements as rare in the lives of various races, but which, owing to the accident of wanting a grammatical language, they are unable to reveal to us. What a descriptive poem must the Eagle have in him, who, sailing in ether, miles beyond our ken, sees earth beneath him as a map, and through gaps in the clouds catches blue glimpses of the ocean and yellow gleams of the desert! Often, while resting on his great pennons in the serene blue, has he seen a thunder-storm unroll its pageant beneath him, and watched the jagged lightning as it darted earthward. (Tom Campbell was once taken up by

an eagle near Oran, and, coming safely down, described what he had seen in immortal verse.) Those hermit birds which live by lonely streams in wild valleys, like the Ousel and the Kingfisher, must be full of delicate fancies — fancies very different from those, which must be very delicate also, that visit the nomads of the air, such as the Swallow, the Cuckoo, and the Quail, with their large experience of countries, and climes, and seas. How delicious, how ever fresh, how close to nature, the life of a Sea-fowl whose home is in some cliff fronting the dawn, and who, dwelling always there, yet sees infinite variety in the ever-changing sky and sea — flapping leisurely over the gentle ripples in the morning breeze — alighting in the depths which mirror the evening sky so placidly as to break into circles round the dip of his wing — piercing, like a ray, the silver haze of the rain-cloud — lost in the dusky bosom of the squall — blown about like a leaf on the storm which strews the shore with wrecks — and, next day, rising and falling in the sunshine on the curves of the swell! Turning from air to earth, the very spirit of Tell — the spirit of independence bred of the pure sharp air of mountain solitudes and the stern

aspect of the snow-clad pinnacles — must live in the Chamois, who seeks his food and pastime on the verge of immeasurable precipices. Grand also, but infinitely different, the solitary empire of some shaggy lord of the wilderness on whose ease none may intrude, and who stalks through life surrounded by images of flight and terror — glowing always with the gloomy rage of the despot — a despot careless of hereditary right, elected by nobody's suffrage, relying on no strength but his own, and absolutely indifferent to public opinion. Below these lofty regions of animal grandeur, but quite within the circle of comfort and happiness, dwell an infinite number of creatures, some finding their felicity in flocks or herds, some in retiring into strict domestic seclusion with the mate of their choice, some in exercising the constructive faculties with which they are so mysteriously and unerringly endowed. The coneys are but a feeble folk, yet they may have their own ideas of household suffrage in those close burrows of theirs, and could doubtless chronicle much that would be valuable to parents while bringing up about fifteen families a year. Rats and mice, and such small deer, lead lives of great variety, observation, and

adventure, though precarious and mostly tragical in their ending, the poison and the steel being as fatal to them as to the enemies of the Borgias, or claimants to disputed successions in the middle ages. And again, beneath these, too insignificant to excite the hostility or cupidity of man, are infinite populations, creeping and winged things, whose spacious home is the broad sunshine ; so that, viewed from a favorable standpoint, every nook and corner of the world, its cellars, garrets, lumber-rooms, and all, seem to overflow with busy delight or quiet happiness.

But who would recognize in this kind and liberal mother, so lavish of pleasures to her offspring, the stern power that makes the lives of whole races sheer misery ? Can any one fancy what it must be to have habitual dread forming an element of life, and transmitted through countless generations till it finds expression in habits of vigilance, of stealth, and of evasion, that we take for peculiar instincts ? This power of communicating the results of experience, and of circulating throughout a whole species the fear of a known evil, is one of the most inexplicable faculties of unreasoning and inartic-

ulate creatures. A naturalist, well qualified to form an opinion, believes, we are told, that the life of all beasts in their wild state is an exceedingly anxious one; that "every antelope in South Africa has literally to run for its life once in every one or two days upon an average, and that he starts or gallops under the influence of a false alarm many times in a day." Our own fields and woods are full of proscribed creatures which must feel as if they had no business in creation, and only draw their breath by stealth, vanishing in earth, or air, or water, at the shadow of an imagined enemy. In those lands of the sun where vegetation is most luxuriant, and food consequently most assured, there is yet a kind of privation as terrible as hunger. "At Koobe," says Livingstone, describing his experiences in Africa, "there was such a mass of mud in the pond, worked up by the wallowing rhinoceros to the consistency of mortar, that only by great labor could we get a space cleared at one side for the water to ooze through and collect in for the oxen. Should the rhinoceros come back, a single roll in the great mass we had thrown on one side would have rendered all our labor vain. It was therefore necessary

for us to guard the spot by night. On these great flats, all around, we saw in the white sultry glare herds of zebras, gnus, and occasionally buffaloes, standing for days, looking wistfully towards the wells for a share of the nasty water." And in other parts of the African continent, when the fierceness of the summer has dried up the rivers, the amphibia, great and small, collect in uncongenial crowds in the pools left along the deeper parts of the channel; and the land animals, the deer, the apes, the birds, stoop hastily and furtively to snatch insufficient draughts from the depths where lurk so many ravenous foes. Then, in colder lands, what wretchedness does winter bring — when the snow puts an end to the livelihood of all the tribes which seek sustenance on the earth, and the frost mocks the misery of those whose food is in the marsh or the pool! The frozen-out woodcock taps in vain for a soft spot in which to insert his slender bill — his larder is locked up and the key gone. Now and then comes a winter so sharp that the naturalist misses, next summer, whole species from their accustomed haunts. In one long frost all the snipe perished in parts of Scotland, and have never been plen-

tiful since. A rural poet, Hurdis, who caught no inconsiderable portion of Cowper's inspiration, has the following passage on the condition of birds in winter, which took such effect on our boyhood as to save many a blackbird and starling from our "resounding tube," and which, on reading it again after the not brief interval now separating us from that golden time, still seems to us much more genuine poetry than many elegant extracts of far higher pretension: —

"Subdued by hunger, the poor feathery tribes,
Small dread of man retain, though wounded oft,
Oft slain, or scared by his resounding tube.
The fieldfare gray, and he of ruddier wing,
Hop o'er the field unheeding. easy prey
To him whose heart has adamant enough
To level thunder at their humbled race.
The sable bird melodious from the bough
No longer springs, alert and clamorous,
Short flight and sudden with transparent wing
Along the dike performing, fit by fit.
Shuddering he sits in horrent coat outswoln.
Despair has made him silent, and he falls
From his loved hawthorn of its berry spoiled,
A wasted skeleton, shot through and through
By the near-aiming sportsman. Lovely bird,
So end thy sorrows, and so ends thy song;
Never again in the still summer's eve,
Or early dawn of purple-vested morn,
Shalt thou be heard, or solitary song
Whistle contented from the watery bough,

What time the sun flings o'er the dewy earth
An unexpected beam, fringing with flame
The cloud immense, whose shower-shedding folds
Have all day dwelt upon a deluged world:
No, thy sweet pipe is mute, it sings no more."

The picture which follows, and which less obviously aims at exciting sympathy, is none the less effective for that:—

"High on the topmost branches of the elm,
In sable conversation sits the flock
Of social starlings, the withdrawing beam
Enjoying, *supperless*, of hasty day."

How mournful for these poor starvelings the fact, apparently so insignificant, that the temperature has fallen below freezing-point! What misery is approaching them in the leaden gloom of the north-east! And in those circles of the earth where the reign of winter is prolonged, hunger is the inseparable associate of life, lying down with it in its shivering sleep, rising with it in its gloomy waking, and tracking its footsteps always along the ice-bound circuit of its weary quest.

But if the vicissitudes of climate are fraught with suffering, so are the vicissitudes of age. The infancy of many animals is as helpless as

babyhood. Few hired nurses, it is true, are so patient, so provident, so watchful, so untiring in care, as the dams, feathered or furred, who, in nest or lair, watch over their young. But then the lives of these guardians are terribly precarious, and innumerable are the orphans of the animal world. The boy with his snare or his stone — the gamekeeper with gin, or net, or gun — the watchful enemies who swoop from the air or spring from the ambush — are very apt to make the nurslings motherless. In how many an eyrie have sat gaping eaglets expectant of the broad food-bringing wings that will never more overshadow them — the said wings being then indeed outstretched on a barn-door, nailed there by that intelligent high-priest of nature, the keeper! In how many burrows starve, before ever seeing the light, litters of young whose providers lie dead in the wood, or hang from a nail in the larder! In how many nests of sticks, swaying on the pine-tops, scream the unfeathered rooks, while the old bird is suspended as a scare-crow in the distant corn-field! Every wet spring drowns in the holes they have never learnt to quit a multitude of small helpless creatures — every storm of

early summer casts innumerable half-fledged birds prematurely on the hard world to cower, and scramble, and palpitate, and hunger, till inevitable doom overtakes them after a more or less short interval. This perilous season of infancy past, however, the youth of animals is, compared with that of man, secure and brief, and their maturity is generally free from morbid or disabling accidents. But then comes the time of old age and decay — old age such as man's would be if wanting all which Macbeth truly says should accompany it, in order to render its many infirmities tolerable — "honor, love, obedience, troops of friends." As the activity necessary to procure food diminishes, and the joints stiffen, and the flesh recedes, leaving to the bones the task of sustaining the wrinkling skin, the sunshine grows less warm, the wind more bitter; and if the worn-out creature is neither made prey of by its enemies, nor put to death (as is the instinct of many races) by its friends, it withdraws to some secret spot to die in solitude. In this unprofitable stage of existence, the protection of man is accorded to domesticated animals on principles strictly commercial. Those which are expected to pay the

expenses of their keep are pretty certain to find an execution put in by their inexorable creditors as soon as they become bankrupt of their services, and those only are suffered to live whose existence is matter of luxury. The old bullfinch is allowed to drop off his perch in the course of nature, and to pipe his own requiem — the old parrot dozes quietly away after forgetting half his phrases, and mixing up the rest in a confusion which may, perhaps, be his way of "babbling of green fields" — the old lapdog is recovered by medical aid out of many apoplexies before submitting to the final stroke — the old spaniel lives on to meditate on the happy hunting-grounds of the past, and perhaps to dream of those of the future; but for the old horse (unless his master be rich as well as kind) there is no interval of rest in old age, wherein to prepare for those other pastures whither he may be hastening, or to reflect on the busy portion of his well-spent or ill-spent life. Necessity generally compels the owner to make an end of a life that will not repay its maintenance. The veteran, "lagging superfluous on the stage," asks for bran and gets a bullet; it is only his corn that he wants

bruised when the knacker arrives with the pole-axe.

Perhaps no case of royalty in reduced circumstances is so sad as that of the lion in his latter days. Frequent as are, in our times, the vicissitudes of monarchs, neither the deposed Queen of Spain at Bayonne, nor the exploded Bomba in Rome, nor, to look farther back, Louis Philippe appearing suddenly in this country as Mr. Smith, with a carpet-bag and cotton umbrella, is so melancholy a figure of fallen greatness as the King of the Solitudes in his old age. The first stage of his decline is marked by the inability any longer to spring on the nimble antelope, or to cope with the sturdy buffalo; and, against his better nature, the leonine Lear, still grand and imposing of aspect, but bereft of his power, is driven to watch for stray children going to the well, or old women picking sticks in the forest. It might be imagined that the sable philosophers of the bereaved tribe would regard this abduction of aged females as praiseworthy, or would at least consider the eating of them as a sufficient punishment for the offence. Not so, however; a lion once known as a man, woman, or child eater, is by no means encour-

aged, even in Africa, in the indulgence of his tastes; and what with constant interruptions, and the necessity for increased vigilance against his foes, he seldom enjoys a meal in peace. As his teeth fail and his joints stiffen, he is no longer able to capture the feeblest crone or to masticate the tenderest virgin; and in the "last stage of all that ends this strange eventful history," he (as we learn from competent authority) catches mice for a subsistence, gulping them like pills, and ekes out the insufficient diet with grass. Imagine this incarnation of absolute power, this rioter in the blood of swift and powerful beasts, this emitter of the roar that causes all the hearts in the wilderness to quake, driven, in what should be a majestic old age, to pick his own salads and to turn mouser! The number of times that, with his large frame and corresponding appetite, he must perform for each scanty meal the degrading act of watching for and pouncing on a mouse, must ultimately deprave his whole character; daily he must sink lower in his own esteem; reformation and suicide are equally denied him; till, happily, the savage who comes upon his track, knowing by signs that he has been forced to graze, knows

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also that his feebleness is great; and finding him not far off, stretched out beneath a bush, in the sleep of exhaustion or the torpor of self-contempt, considerately hastens with his assagai to draw a veil over the painful scene.

Were we to stop here, our disquisition would be little other than a Jeremiad — an empty lament for misfortunes without prospect of remedy — a crying over spilt milk, which would be equally foreign to our natural character and our acquired philosophy. But evil as has been the hap of the animal world, there are visible signs of hope for it. Its relations with us are manifestly and rapidly improving, and this is owing to a manifest and rapid improvement in ourselves. Whether, amid all our boasts of the progress of the species, man has really succeeded in redressing the balance of good and evil in his nature, may be matter of unpleasant doubt. Sometimes, when a very reprehensible or lamentable failing of some vanished generation is set very pressingly before us — some horrid persecution, political or religious — some triumph of unreason — some huge injustice practised by a despot on a people, or by a people on themselves, — we, being at the time, perhaps, in es-

pecial good humor with the world around us, in which those particular evils are not possible, take heart, and would fain believe that humanity is getting on. But presently, when we notice how our contemporaries form what they imagine to be their convictions, what sort of idols they worship, what kind of progress it is which is least disputable, and of which they are most proud, we lose courage again, and feel as if man were doomed forever to revolve in the vicious circle of some maelstrom, some system inside of which all is delusion, while outside of it all is doubt. Surveying mankind with extensive view from the prehistoric ages to Parliamentary committees on education, we fancy that we see much of our gain balanced by corresponding loss, and that we have made room for many of our most valued characteristics only by discarding qualities which have rendered whole races forever famous. As we grow more practical, we decry magnanimity — ceasing to be superstitious, we forget to be earnest — vigor, born of enterprise, is smothered in luxury — and the cuckoo science ousts the sparrow faith. But all the time, various as are the aspects of various ages, the elements of humanity remain

unaltered, however disguised by their changing vesture; even as while the landscape shifts, in one period a wood, or swamp, or heath, in the next a farm or a city, the central fires are still glowing beneath, and still betray their presence at times in an earthquake or a volcano. Scrape a man of science, or a man of progress, or a man of fashion, a great statesman or a great general, and you still get a savage. But nevertheless, in striking the balance between old and new, there is an item that must stand to our credit absolutely, without deduction. Our relations with the races which share the earth with us are so changed, and the change is still so progressive, that a new element would almost appear to have been developed in our nature. All the authors, not only of antiquity, but of modern times, down to a few generations ago, may be searched without the discovery of a dozen passages indicative of that fellowship with our cotenants of the globe which is now so common a feeling. That the good man is merciful to his beast — that the ewe lamb of the parable drank of its owner's cup and lay in his bosom — that Chaucer's prioress was so charitable as to weep for a trapped mouse — that the poor

beetle which we tread upon feels a pang as great as when a giant dies — that Dapple was the cherished friend of Sancho, — are chief among the few cases which occur to us, where consideration for animals is implied in the best known books of the past. Princes and heroes have had their favorites, four-legged or feathered, hawk or horse or hound — and the coursers of Achilles, the dog of Ulysses, and the Cid's steed Bavieca, have their place in romance and in history ; but their favor was born rather of pride than of affection, and these are but slight instances to set against so many ages of mere chattelage. But what a wealth of pleasant companionship do we now enjoy in the society of those four-legged familiars without whom no household seems complete ! and how largely do their representatives figure in the literature and art of the present century ! the affectionate portraiture by pen and brush being both the natural result of that kindlier feeling, and the means of rendering it deeper and wider. Looking backward to the beginning of the vista of life through which we have journeyed, the best-loved books of our childhood were those in which regard for animals was directly or in-

directly inculcated; the indirect lesson being, however, much the most impressive. Thus when Æsop, desiring to satirize or instruct mankind through the medium of animals, represents his lions, dogs, foxes, monkeys, and cranes, as not merely conversing, but delivering didactic discourses, and holding political debates, it is impossible for the reader who possesses the ardent faith and the plastic imagination which are the choicest endowments of childhood, not to invest real animals with some of the faculties imputed to the creations of the fabulist. Fairy tales, too, resort largely to the animal world for machinery; and the grimalkin on the hearth-rug rises immensely in the estimation of the juvenile student of "Puss in Boots," as a possible personator of the agent of the Marquis of Carabas, and an artful plotter, greatly superior to mere men in the devising of stratagems. The little bright-eyed nibblers behind the wainscot have something of "the consecration and the poet's dream" reflected on them by the rhymed history of "The Town and Country Mice." The solemn ape, surveying mankind from the top of an organ, or meditating gloomily in his cage in a caravan, may well be suspected of

being other than he seems, considering that, in the same form, a Calender, a king's son, was once disguised by powerful enchantment. The hare, darting from a clump of fern at the approach of the feminine intruder in white frock, blue sash, cotton socks, and bare calves, is invested with most pathetic interest in the eyes of the wondering gazer, by the recollection of that other hare whose many friends so utterly failed her in the hour of need. Far, indeed, from looking on birds and beasts as "the lower animals," the youth whose childish sentiments of wonder and companionship have been thus cultivated, regards the creatures around him with affection not unmixed with respect, as the possessors of many faculties which he does not share, the thinkers of many thoughts unknown to him, the pilgrims in many paths apart from his; while, nevertheless, they have so much in common with him as to constitute ground for intimacy and friendship. Children of this stamp, of whatever degree, going forth to their sports, whether on the well-kept lawn or the village green, are pretty sure to be accompanied by a dog — perhaps a skye with a blue ribbon, perhaps a nondescript cur in a leathern collar,

made by the paternal hand of the cobbler,—while the youngest of the party bears with him a great tomcat, whose eyes are seen patiently winking between his uncomfortably outstretched legs over the bearer's pinafored shoulder, and

whose tail (from the equality in their stature) drags on the ground; and, in such cases, Vixen and Grey Tom, far from being mere passive appendages to the amusements of the hour, are looked on as sage confederates, of great experience in the art of rightly spending a holiday.

As a childhood of this kind merges into youth, its progressive literature still aids in nourishing that love for animals which has

often been a distinguishing characteristic of the men of genius who stamp their spirit on the age. Scott's great hounds — Fang, the gaunt friend of Gurth, the swineherd ; Roswal, guardian of the standard for Kenneth of Scotland ; Bevis, companion of Sir Henry Lee ; and Luath, beloved of the Lady of the Lake — are magnificent ; and as for small dogs, has he not given to the whole tribe of Dandie Dinmonts a local habitation and a name ? Bulwer's Sir Isaac is a careful and reverential study by a great master, of a highly but not preternaturally gifted dog. Dickens has doubly and trebly proved himself a dog fancier, by his portraits of Diogenes, the enemy of Mr. Toots ; and Gyp, adored by Dora ; and Boxer, the associate of John Peerybingle, who took an obtrusive interest in the baby : besides which he has devoted a whole paper of his " Uncommercial Traveller " to dogs, especially those who keep blind men, and has added to his animal gallery a capital pony and a miraculous raven. George Eliot has given Adam Bede's friend, the schoolmaster, a female dog of great merit, and has bestowed a vast amount of affectionate skill on the portrait of the ape Annibal, in the " Span-

ish Gypsy." Then what reverence for the wearers of fur and feathers is implied in the works of Landseer! — what sympathy with them in the popularity of those world-famous pictures! — though we could wish that some incidents had remained uncommemorated by Sir Edwin's brush, such as the fox sneaking up to prey on the dead stags locked in each other's horns, and the transfixed otter writhing round to bite the shaft of the spear, which are simply abominable. Nor, amidst the many delineators of animals who adorn the age — the Bonheurs, Ansdells, Coopers, Weirs, Willises, and (let us add) Grisets — must Leech be forgotten. What arrogance in his fat lapdogs, what fun and mischief and frank good-fellowship in his Scotch terriers, what spirit in his hounds and horses! The youth thus sustained in his finer tastes by great examples, enters manhood, and passes through it in constant friendly communion with relations and dependants and associates of every kind. His horses are his trusted familiars; if a sportsman, he is cordial with his dogs, rides well forward to hounds (though never to the extreme distress or injury of his good steed), and with his whole life gives the

lie to those maudlin humanitarians who insist that cruelty constitutes the pleasure of sport. His mother instilled, and his sisters share, his sympathies for the inarticulate races. How infinitely does that girl add to her attractions who thinks more of her spaniel or her collie, her superannuated pony or antediluvian macaw, than of the most cherished inanimate possession, not excepting the mysterious structure of her back hair! Memory and imagination come in to enhance affection: the old donkey in the paddock, as he approaches her for his daily crust with his exalted ears bent forward, reminds her of the childhood which she still recollects with delight, though not, as yet, with regret. The trills of her blackbird in his wicker cage, placed there because he was found in the wood with a broken wing, cause her to think of the Spring, when a young maid's, no less than a young man's, fancy "lightly turns to thoughts of love." The gay parroquet, in its gilded palace, suggests to her, in its rich green, the foliage of tropical forests—in its splendid scarlet, the flowers which glow amidst the leaves; and when its form of grace and beauty is lifeless, it is consigned to its garden-

tomb with tears which well become the eyes whose glances many lovers watch for. If her acts of charity to the featherless bipeds around her are many, not fewer are those which benefit the unfortunate and the helpless who have no language wherein to speak their complaints; and when she has children, she teaches them, as a lesson not inferior to any to be found in Dr. Watts, or Dr. Paley, or Dr. Newman, or any other Doctor whatsoever, that

> "He prayeth well who loveth well
> Both man and bird and beast."

We will now, after the manner of great moralists, such as he who depicted the careers of the Industrious and Idle Apprentices, give the reverse of this picture, in the horrible imp of empty head and stony heart, who has been trained to regard the creatures around him as the mere ministers of his pleasure and his pride, and who, in fact, represents in its worst form the former state of feeling respecting animals. Provided, almost in his cradle, by his unnatural parents, with puppies and kittens whereon to wreak his evil propensities, he treats them, to the best of his ability, as the infant Hercules treated the serpents, and when

provoked to retaliate with tooth or claw, they are ordered, with his full concurrence, to immediate execution. A little later he hails the periodical pregnancies of the ill-used family cat as so many opportunities in store for drowning her progeny. The fables, so dear to lovable childhood, of lambs and wolves, apes and foxes, are rejected by his practical mind as rubbishy lies. All defenceless animals falling into his power are subject to martyrdom by lapidation. Show him a shy bird of rare beauty on moor or heath, in wood or valley, and the soulless goblin immediately shies a stone at it. Stray tabbies are the certain victims of his bull-terrier; and the terrier itself, when it refuses to sit up and smoke a pipe, or to go into the river after a water-rat, is beaten and kicked without mercy. He goes with a relish to see the keeper shoot old Ponto, who was whelped ten years ago in the kennel, and comes in to give his sisters (who don't care) appreciative details of the execution. As a sportsman he is a tyrant to his dogs, a butcher on his horse, and sitting on that blown and drooping steed, he looks on with disgusting satisfaction when the fox is broken up. Throughout life he regards all his

animated possessions (including his unhappy wife) simply as matters of a certain money value, to be made to pay or to be got rid of. Not to pursue his revolting career through all its stages, we will merely hint that he probably ends by committing a double parricide; and being righteously condemned to the gallows, is reprieved only by the inappropriate tenderness of the Home Secretary.

To one who considers the subject, it will be apparent that the influences at work in favor of animals, are of a nature to gain in force, and that their friends, constantly increasing in number, will end by shouldering their foes altogether to the shady side of public sentiment. It is now a very old story that a law exists for the prevention of cruelty to animals, who thus for the first time acquire a legal footing in the world. But laws are often inoperative, unless it is the interest of somebody to enforce them; and as the injured parties cannot in this case apply to the nearest magistrate for a warrant, in order to help them in the matter certain worthy men and women long ago formed a Society, which is increasing in prosperity every year. Many deeds of cruelty are still done

which cannot be punished or detected ; but in thousands of cases which would formerly have escaped even reprobation, wronged animals now appear in court by "their next friend" (one of the society's officers), and make the perpetrators pay in purse or person. Not only is a check thus imposed on small private atrocities, like the bruising and lashing of horses by brutal wagoners, the martyrizing of cats and dogs by blackguard boys, and the battering of donkeys by ferocious costermongers, but heavy blows are also dealt at such organized cruelties as the crowding of animals on rough sea voyages in unfit vessels, the transmission of others on long journeys by rail without food or water, the shearing and starving of sheep in winter, the setting of steel traps for wild creatures, and the wanton destruction of sea-fowl and rare birds. A society having the same objects exists in France, and in that country, as well as in Australia and several States of the American Union, stringent laws protect many kinds of birds. Kindred societies with special objects have also been formed among us ; drinking-troughs for animals in hot weather abound in the metropolis, and a Home has been estab-

lished for Lost Dogs. No kind of animal misery is more common or more lamentable than that of these outcasts, who may be seen any day in one or other of our London thoroughfares, purposely lost in many cases by owners who are unwilling to pay the five-shilling dog tax, though a single day's abstinence from drunkenness, or a very brief sacrifice of pleasure or comfort in each year, would suffice to retain the old companion. The first stage of being thus astray in the wilderness of London is marked by a wild galloping to and fro, with an occasional pause to gaze down cross-streets. At length, hopeless and wearied, the lost one sinks into a slow trot, occasionally lifting his hollow, anxious eyes to scan an approaching face, and almost seeming to shake his head in despair as he lowers them again. Then comes the period of ravenous hunting in gutters and corners for chance scraps, of gazing fixedly down kitchen areas, of sleeping coiled up on doorsteps, and of pertinacious haunting of neighborhoods where some hand has once bestowed a morsel. All those avenues of stone which we call streets are to the poor starveling more barren of food than the desert, but he knows how

the interiors abound in meat and drink; he knows, too, that any chance passenger, whose face attracts his canine sympathies, may introduce him to one of these scenes of plenty, and he attaches himself, for a time, humbly and wistfully, to some one whose visage hits his fancy, and who, perhaps, is never aware of the thin shadow which follows his footsteps. At last both appetite and strength have departed, the recollection of his home has become an uncertain dream, and he retires into a corner to die, unless, in some slum, the interesting family of the rat-catcher, the costermonger, the dog-stealer, or the sporting cobbler, seizing him joyfully as their lawful prey, proceed to ascertain by experiment what capacity, not for nourishment but for agony, may be still left in him. By recent regulations the police are authorized to conduct to their nearest station these unfortunates, and to transmit them from thence to the Home at Holloway. We once visited the retreat, situated in a courtyard in the outskirts of that fashionable suburb. Our entrance was signalized by the hasty withdrawal of a number of cats, whose stealthy profiles were presently seen on the surrounding walls, wearing all the

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aspect of guilty evasion, for, in fact, their enterprise had been predatory, and directed against the dogs' food. The dogs themselves, seated in rows on the floor and on benches, were few in number and choice in kind — high-bred, deep-jowled bloodhounds, whose home had been the castle-yard of some great seigneur — poodles who would have been ornaments to the bench of any court of judicature — weak-eyed, pink-nosed, querulous Maltese in blue ribbons — toy-terriers in splendid collars like orders of knighthood — pugs with muzzles so short that one wondered where their tongues could be — and intelligent skyes who whined and frisked at the approach of well-clad visitors ; all of them at that moment being doubtless sought for throughout London by young men of good character, in genteel liveries, whose places were endangered by the carelessness which had caused the loss of the favorites. On inquiring where the commoner sorts of dogs might be, we found that as regarded them, the Home might have been properly described as their long home, inasmuch as all who were not likely to be claimed were immediately put to death and buried. It seemed dubious whether the animals thus per-

manently relieved from want, would, if consulted, regard this method of disposal as a high favor; and, moreover, so very inexpensive a provision did not seem to call for large contributions. Later inquiries, however, have produced answers describing a more favorable arrangement; and it seems that only those whose life may be considered a burden to them are now destroyed, the rest having situations procured for them of a kind that was not quite clearly apparent to us; farmed out, perhaps, like parish apprentices, and, let us hope, at least as well cared for.*

It would seem, then, that the fancy in which we indulged at the beginning of this paper, of more genial relations being established between the dominant and the less fortunate races of the earth, is not without prospect of realization. The societies we have mentioned may in course of time be extended till they cease to be separate societies any longer, by including all the right-minded and right-hearted of the hu-

* The Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals are about to establish a Home for Lost and Disabled Animals in Boston. Such a one has been in operation in Philadelphia for two years, under the care of the Women's Branch of the Pennsylvania Society.

man race, each of whom will be as vigilant as any official to prevent and detect cruelty. To lead "a dog's life of it" may come to mean universally a not unpleasant state of existence — "slaving like a horse" will denote a wholesome and moderate share of labor — and "monkey's allowance" may represent a fair amount of halfpence in proportion to the kicks.

As time goes on, the enthusiast may perhaps begin to catch glimpses of the renewal of that other period which tradition and fable point to in the past, when the close kinship existing between the articulate and inarticulate sylvan races led to a deeper mutual understanding and more intimate communion. In times when the doctrine that all classes ought to be represented in Parliament is favorably received, the next step would obviously be to elect members for brute constituencies, or at least to agitate for that result. The effect of a great cattle-meeting in Smithfield, conducted with much lowing and bellowing, and followed by large processions of horned animals through our principal thoroughfares, could hardly fail to produce important constitutional changes. A charge of cab-horses out on strike, conducted by some

equine Beales against the park-palings with a view to pasturing inside, might extract large concessions from a weak Cabinet; while a monster-meeting of aggrieved dogs under the clock-tower at Westminster, howling their complaints to the moon, and vociferously invoking "a plague on both our Houses," might be attended with legislative results not inferior to those which Mr. Bright anticipated when he advised the coercion of Parliament by a like expedient.* Later, when progress shall happily have brought us to government by pure majorities, that epoch may commence which Æsop seems to hint at in the fable where the lion talks of turning sculptor and representing the beast astride of the man. Once, while pursuing this somewhat fantastic train of thought, we beheld in a kind of vision, such as visited Bunyan and Dante, a scene of imaginary retribution awaiting the human race at the hands of the oppressed. Mul-

* Something of this sort seems to be anticipated in the English Dog Bill of the present year, which commences with the extraordinary preamble — "Whereas, it is expedient that further protection should be provided against dogs." What can our poor friends have been doing, to call for the special interposition of "the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled?"

titudes of human beings were systematically fattened as food for the carnivora. They were frequently forwarded to great distances by train, in trucks, without food or water. Large numbers of infants were constantly boiled down to form broth for invalid animals. In over-populous districts babies were given to malicious young cats and dogs to be taken away and drowned. Boys were hunted by terriers, and stoned to death by frogs. Mice were a good deal occupied in setting man-traps, baited with toasted cheese, in poor neighborhoods. Gouty old gentlemen were put into the shafts of night-cabs, and forced to totter, on their weak ankles and diseased joints, to clubs, where they picked up fashionable young colts, and took them, at such pace as whipcord could extract, to St. John's Wood, to visit chestnut fillies. Flying figures in scarlet coats, buckskins, and top-boots were run into by packs of foxes. Old cock-grouse strutted out for a morning's sport, and came in to talk of how many brace of country gentlemen they had bagged. The fate of gamekeepers was appalling; they lived a precarious life in holes and caves; they were perpetually harried and set upon by game and

vermin : held fast in steel traps, their toes were nibbled by stoats and martens ; finally, their eyes picked out by owls and kites, they were gibbeted alive on trees, head downwards, when polecats mounted sentry over them, favoring the sufferers with their agreeable presence till the termination of their martyrdom. In one especially tragic case, a corpulent and short-sighted naturalist in spectacles dodged about painfully amid the topmost branches of a wood, while a Mias underneath, armed with a gun, inflicted on him dreadful wounds. A veterinary surgeon of Alfort was stretched on his back, his arms and legs secured to posts, in order that a horse might cut him up alive for the benefit of an equine audience ; but the generous steed, incapable of vindictive feelings, with one disdainful stamp on the midriff crushed the wretch's life out.

Though these visions are but such stuff as dreams are made of, yet, nevertheless, is their fabric not altogether baseless. Besides the signs which we have enumerated as indicating that the relationship of the tribes of the earth with the human family are more conscientiously recognized than of old, animals have lately

achieved the important success of acquiring their own especial organ in the press.* We do not mean that animals perform the part either of editor or contributors to this periodical — we wish they did.

Many authors renowned for pathos — Kit Marlowe, Byron, Edgar Poe — have been sad dogs ; yet which of them could write anything half so touching as would be the reminiscences of some infinitely sadder dog, meditating on his sufferings in the Home at Holloway? As for imaginary griefs — go to the cab-horse, thou grumbler, consider his woes and be silent! What a poem would the ostrich write with his claw on the sand of the desert, and how priceless compared with the verses even of laureates, would be the transcript thereof! "*Mes Larmes*, by a Crocodile," — sensational, no doubt, beyond French or English precedent, excelling Sand, or Sue, or Braddon, — would, as a serial, make the fortune of any magazine. Could the lion translate for us that far gaze of his, which, disregarding the Sunday visitors in front of his

* "Our Dumb Animals," published monthly by the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, at 46 Washington Street, Boston.

cage, is fixed on some imaginary desert horizon — what extract from ancient or modern poetry could compete with it? What a variety of subject and of style would thus open on us, far beyond the diversities of human authorship — lyric, epic, dramatic, descriptive — defiant outburst and passionate lament — life in innumerable phases, domestic, romantic, gloomy, rapturous, cynical, and cheerful! Even without such aid we constantly, though unconsciously, acknowledge their kinship with humanity. In their simple, clear natures, undimmed by the breath of public opinion, unconfused by the effort to conform or to simulate, we see mirrored our own virtues and vices. There are other proper studies of mankind besides man. The fox, the bear, the bee, the eagle, the lion,

the hog, the serpent, the dove, are all types of men and women. Prophetic language calls the worm our sister; and a philosopher of these times defines the Frenchman of the Revolution as a "tiger-ape." We have ourselves heard an indignant lady characterize a too insinuating swain as "that crocodile;" and lately, at a civic feast abounding in calipash and calipee, we observed, or fancied we observed, that many of the guests combined, as in Byron's line, "the rage of the vulture" with the "love of the turtle." And do we not stand in almost humiliating relation to the inevitable crow, who spends so much of his valuable time in imprinting his autograph on the corners of all our eyes, seeming thereby to mark us for his own? Deeply impressed with the closeness and reality of these connections, and deriving no inconsiderable share of the enjoyment of life from our keen sense of them, it has been to us not only a pleasure but a solemn duty, often postponed, indeed, but never abandoned, thus to break ground in the corners of a great subject, and to record with pride the sentiments of affection and respect which we entertain for Our Poor Relations.

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